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Caribbean Espiritismo (Spiritist) Altars: The Indian and the Congo

Judith Bettelheim

Accompanied by my colleague Mildred Riviera-Martínez, on Sunday, June 29, 1997, I drove along the new *autopista* leading out of San Juan, Puerto Rico, toward Guyama. As we traveled by old sugarcane fields, I smiled to myself; I knew we were in the right place. For the next three hours, we wandered from neighborhood to neighborhood, from square to square, and finally we came to the home of Don Miguel Flores. Flores invited us into an unadorned, simple, rectangular wood structure. As I walked into the room I was overwhelmed by the cacophony of images: statues, chromolithographs, assorted fabrics, crosses, and varied knickknacks decorated a long, horizontal altar. Among the figures I recognized Christ, the Virgin, and many saints. Surprisingly, I also encountered Buddhas and a camel, as well as a cluster of crouching all-black figures. At dead center was the statue of an American Indian. I knew that Flores was the leader of this Espiritismo center, but what was the context for this amazing mélange of images?

Espiritismo in Context

One of the least researched visual aspects of African Diaspora and Caribbean culture is the altar complex associated with the religious practice known as Espiritismo or Spiritism.[1] Among the numerous publications dealing with the practice of the religion, its popularity, and its impact on community well-being, none mentions, let alone analyzes, the altar arts associated with Espiritismo. One reason for the dearth of scholarship and serious critical attention paid to these altar arts is, I believe, a deeply embedded art historical prejudice against what is thought of as kitsch. My conviction on this point is shared, and indeed shaped, by Celeste Olalquiaga, who has written extensively about Latino Catholic iconography and kitsch.[2] If, as Olalquiaga writes, "Kitsch steals motifs and materials at random, regardless of the original ascription of the sources,"[3] then Espiritismo altars would certainly qualify as kitsch, and an analysis of Espiritismo altars may well promote a reconsideration of the class-based prejudices against kitsch and related genres of cultural production. Such prejudices constitute a basis for much art historical analysis of the twentieth century.[4] Olalquiaga's most important contribution is a valuation of vernacular urban culture.

For many scholars concerned with cultural production from Latin America (with Latin America understood as a wide cultural, rather than geographic, region) kitsch, as both a cultural phenomenon and a descriptive designation, is especially significant. The association of kitsch with class-based prejudices forces a (re)consideration of cultural production and social difference. As recently as the mid-1990s the influential Cuban critic and curator Gerardo Mosquera wrote:

> . . . there is a new appreciation and even a utopian view of it [mass culture] and of kitsch, which has eliminated the Greenbergian distance typical of previous critics. However, the point is that the increasing international contact between "high" and "low" cultures—which had always been an important factor in Latin America—implies more of a mutual exchange of signifiers and resources between fields that nonetheless remain separate with regard to their signifieds and specific circuits.[5]

Mosquera's optimism may have been a bit premature. This debate has not been resolved. The separation that Mosquera alludes to continues to present intellectual barriers against a serious study of many forms of vernacular production.[6] As Néstor García Canclini reminds us, class and ethnic issues invade any discussion of modernism and modernization, and thus an analysis of social difference must be included in any deliberation of the gap between the cultured, or high art, and the popular. Certainly, the altars fabricated for the various "noninstitutionalized" religions of the Americas are the products of the amazing creativity realized by practitioners of popular religions.[7]

Religious imagery and kitsch share an all-important attribute, the direct appeal to emotion. As Olalquiaga remarks, "as the domain of 'bad taste,' kitsch stands for artistic endeavor gone sour as well as for anything that is considered too obvious, dramatic, repetitive, artificial, or exaggerated."[8] This is an old debate, and, unfortunately, the antikitsch position remains basically unchallenged. While I do not intend to prolong this debate, I certainly maintain that such a debate elucidates the lack of available scholarship on these and related altar arts.

While the altars give testimony to the intriguing complexity of Caribbean religious arts, the historical tapestry that contributes to the visual language of Espiritismo as manifested in Cuba and Puerto Rico is my main interest.[9] Rather than analyzing all the elements connected to these altars, I focus on specific and recurring images, such as the representation of the American Indian (Native American). As in much of my previous research, I rely on stylistic analysis of formal attributes as primary signifiers (here concentrating on the feather headdress). These signifiers serve to contextualize the performance, costumes, and styles under consideration. Examining what type of cultural contact and communication may have caused the similarities in style, I suggest that the images of the Indian may derive in part from central Africa (Congo), filtered through the central African–based Cuban religion Palo Monte Mayombe.[10] Known as Palo Monte, this religious belief is centered on assistance from ancestors and a relation with the earth, with one's land, with one's home. Under the auspices of Nzambi Mpungu, the greatest power in the Palo Monte faith, practitioners (all those initiated in the

religion) venerate spirits of their ancestors and spirits of natural forces. The Indian is one of the ancestral forces recognized in the religion; it signifies land and home in the Americas. Thus, elements from Congo, an African ancestral homeland, and the Americas are conflated in the figure of the Indian. But this is not an either/or issue. There may be multiple sources and reasons for the appropriation of the Indian figure. Although I stress one particular reading in this article, it is not necessarily the only one.

There is a basic assumption underlying my thesis: people do not just copy traits; traits are acquired when they correspond with an ideology, a faith, or a personally developed belief system already in place. Thus, a basic spiritualism and an African-based religious foundation merged in creating and popularizing the use of American Indian imagery. As Karen McCarthy Brown, a scholar of the anthropology of religion, points out, "The Indian could have been used as a stand-in for lost African ancestors who were fundamental to the practice of religion in most west and central African areas."[11] This interpretation coincides with my own research regarding the Indian as it is understood and used by Palo Monte practitioners in Cuba. For them, the Indian represents intense spirituality, aggressive power, and self-determination. The Indians are the first owners of the land, a people who resisted and continue to resist occupation. They are, in fact, the original ancestors of the Americas. So, although I have stressed an iconographic reading of the Indian figure and its accoutrements as historically associated with central African heritage, I want to acknowledge a broader reading of the Indian as a reference to ancestors, resistance, and appropriated spiritual power. Señora Rafaela Santell, a practicing Espiritismo medium for forty-four years, recognizes different kinds of Indians, such as the Taíno or the Apache, and each type holds special powers, but they are always used in healing ceremonies. The indigenous Indian, like the indigenous African, is close to the land and has the power to heal.[12]

Many of the liturgical attributes of Espiritismo are evident in altars composed by practitioners who follow variants of Kardecian Spiritualism. The core beliefs of this practice can be found in a book of orations, *Le livre des esprits* (*The Book of Spirits*), by Frenchman Allan Kardec (1804–1869), born Hyppolyte Léon Denizard Rival. Published in 1857, it has been translated, paraphrased, and reprinted continually since publication. By 1868 Kardec had published six other books related to Spiritist studies, and these were translated into Spanish from the original French almost immediately. Kardec's ideas initially attracted European and Latin American intellectuals and urban elites, then quickly filtered into other sectors of society. By the 1860s his work was available in Cuba and Puerto Rico. In Cuba, Espiritismo grew in importance immediately. By the 1870s its widespread availability had a pronounced effect on religious practices in Spanish- and French-speaking Caribbean and Latin America.[13] Throughout the 1880s it became the subject of various publications concerning psychological and theological studies. In its practice it was conceived as standing against the rigid dogma of the Catholic Church. This was important because the Catholic Church supported Spain, rather than Cuban freedom fighters, during the Ten Years War of 1868–78 and subsequent independence movements.[14] It thus appealed to the Creole petite bourgeoisie and the mostly Afro-Cuban working class and unemployed.

In both Cuba and Puerto Rico, Espiritismo provided a vehicle for healing treatments, particularly among peoples already familiar with African-based customs and local herbalism.[15] As George Brandon notes, "Espiritismo also took on the colors of its creole environment. Espiritismo grew by accumulating elements of Spanish and Cuban herbalism, Native American healing practices, and the scent of African magic." [16] In both Puerto Rico and Cuba, Espiritismo incorporated spirit guides that were not included in Kardec's original treatise. In Cuba particularly, the practice differs in a significant way from the original Kardec texts. Brandon explains that, "both black and white mediums manifest spirit guides who were 'Africans de nación'—[meaning of particular African nations, such as] Lucumi, Mandingo, Mina, and Congolese tribesmen who had suffered and died in slavery."[17] In other words, followers of Espiritismo, from a foundation of Kardec's Spiritism, formulate their religious practice and its associated altar-assemblage constructions according to a syncretic and flexible system.

In Cuba, African-derived religious systems like La Regla de Ocha, popularly known as Santería, "drew on and modified the séance-based ritual technology of Kardecian Spiritism (Espiritismo) to communicate with the dead. . . ."[18] As Raul Canizares points out, "Although Spiritism serves a valuable function in Santería, it has not been absorbed by it . . . [and] Spiritism—specifically the Kardecian kind—has retained its own identity and non-African character."[19] Steve Quintana, a Boston-based priest of Obatalá (the father of the *oricha* pantheon of spirits) in La Regla de Ocha, is descended from a lineage of practitioners. Both his grandmother and great-grandmother were "spiritualist mediums" in Havana.[20] During an interview centering on the custom of making dolls for deceased family members and other spirit guides, Quintana indicated that these dolls should be distinguished from those representing the Afro-Cuban *orichas* (spirits) of Santería, although both types of dolls could be used by religious practitioners who incorporated Espiritismo into their Santería practice.[21] It is precisely such a *cruzado* (crossed) practice that produces beliefs and altar iconography incorporating Indian spirit guides and Indian imagery.

Altar art for non-Christian religions served and continues to serve a political as well as religious function. Although priests make large altars for public use, many practitioners build smaller home altars. As Amalia Mesa-Bains has clearly established, Chicana or Latina altar builders assemble home altars as an appropriation of power from the male-dominated Catholic Church.[22] In the Caribbean, both men and women constructed and continue to construct home altars as an act of appropriation against not only a dominant church or state but also a dominant colonial and historically slave-holding society. These altars reflect a type of community-based spirituality and power. Espiritismo altars serve these same functions.

Espiritismo Altars

How can one distinguish an Espiritismo altar, which is fundamental to the practice, from other non-Christian altars assembled in the observance of the numerous Caribbean

1 The *casa-templo* (house temple) of Tata Francisco Casteneda, with an Espiritismo *mesa blanca* (white table) in the foreground, photographed in Havana, Cuba, July 1998 (photo: author)

religions? Since the populations under discussion have come into contact with multiple cultures, altar construction is fluid, mixing a variety of religious systems and iconographies and inventing new ones. Many religious practitioners create altars that are associated with crossed practices. In other words, devotees and *espiritistas* (leaders, mediums) may combine more than one religion in their ceremonies and accumulative altar installations. Each *espiritista* negotiates multiple systems to make a personal altar assemblage within a certain recognizable frame.

In its simplest form, an Espiritismo altar can consist of a white, cloth-covered table on which filled water containers are placed (Fig. 1). The table derives from Allan Kardec's initial teachings and in Caribbean Spanish is called the *mesa blanca,* or white table. It can be of any size or proportion; its dimensions are often regulated by the spatial restrictions of a given room or temple. Espiritismo altars emphasize elevated horizontal space, whereas altars for other religions like Santería or Vodou emphasize vertical space and are often hierarchically organized, from ground (floor) to sky (ceiling). In Palo Monte, most altar accoutrements make contact with the ground (floor).

The core of Espiritismo practice involves communication with spirits of the dead, and these spirits reveal themselves

through spirit possession. Since water serves as the avenue of communication, glasses, cups, and goblets filled with water constitute the fundamental altar elements. Each water vessel usually has associations with a particular genre of spirits, and each spirit accomplishes a particular type of work. To assist in this work, a practitioner (and, by extension, an altar) will accumulate spirit helpers, most often represented by figurines and dolls (I deliberately use the word *figurine* to imply a commercially mass-produced small figure). These spirits are called on by the medium and may intervene on behalf of a client. The jobs they perform usually relate to healing or to solving immediate life problems. In addition to the figurines, an altar may display vases with flowers, cigars, candles, and sacred texts, such as Kardec's collection of orations. In most cases, the longer an *espiritista* has been in practice, the more crowded and larger the altar becomes. As the *espiritista* accumulates power through experience, the altar accumulates objects; the myriad types of figurines embody different types of spiritual power.

In the Cuban examples I have seen, ancestor portraits, either photographs or paintings, are displayed on or hung above the table (Fig. 1). These may be portraits of deceased family ancestors or, as will be discussed below, portraits of generic types of ancestral spirits, like the Congo or the Indian. (Notice the portraits of Indians hanging below the photograph on the right in Figure 2.) These ancestors are responsible for different types of spiritual work or tasks. In Puerto Rico the altars are generally permanent and are located in a one-room structure with its own entrance, which is called the Centro. Though these altars are permanent, the arrangement of materials on the altars may vary with each ceremony. Some Puerto Rican altars include a number of long shelves in addition to the *mesa blanca.* In the Cuban examples, the *mesa blanca* is usually located in a section of a room in which altar assemblages dedicated to other religions may also be found (Fig. 1). In the *casa-templo* (house temple) of Tata Francisco Castaneda, a Cuban version of the *mesa blanca* holds glasses filled with water, an ancestor's photograph, and Espiritismo dolls. The *mesa blanca* is placed beneath a portrait of a figure known as "our Congo ancestor." In the portrait one can see the sacred iron cauldron of the Palo Monte religion, and to the rear of the large room is a throne dedicated to an *oricha* of the Santería religion (I will discuss this crossed practice in detail below). Again, certain objects on the table are permanent, as are the ancestor portraits, but altar accoutrements may be added or substituted depending on the occasion or need of the client. These permanent spirit altars can be passed down to subsequent generations. This is not true in other Afro-Caribbean religions like Santería or Palo Monte, as the altar is disassembled at the death of the spiritual leader.

The altar assemblage of a Puerto Rican *espiritista* presents a more complicated tableau. Flores has been the leader of his own Centro de Espiritismo, in Puente de Jobos, Guyama, since 1975.[23] Located in the rear of the Centro is a complex altar group (Fig. 3). In the foreground stands the Kardecian-derived freestanding *mesa blanca* (here painted blue). The *mesa blanca* holds a goblet filled with water and a necklace strung with a cross, along with cigars, incense receptacles, and a floral offering.

2 Espiritista Marcia Rengifo, Espiritismo altar, detail showing, on the side wall, large paintings of a male and female Indian and, above the male head, a bow and a photograph of Espiritista Marcia's father, Santiago de Cuba, photographed in 1995 (photo: Nancy Mikelsons)

Behind the *mesa blanca,* along the back wall, runs a shelflike altar containing figurines of all the assistants who aid Flores during his séances and cures. The assistants take the form of mass-produced ceramic figurines of various saints and spirit helpers derived from a variety of religious traditions. Vases with flowers, candles, books of sacred texts, and a crucifix are also positioned on the altar. Several crucifixes hang on the wall behind the shelf,[24] as do a variety of chromolithographs depicting saints and Virgins that are important to Espiritismo as well as to the Cuban religion Santería, which Flores does not practice.[25]

A plaster-cast, commercially produced American Indian holding a long-stem pipe sits cross-legged in the center of the altar (Fig. 4). Flores calls him El Indio de la Paz, or Indian of Peace. Flores remarked, "The Indians serve like sentinels, sort of a body guard. . . . Therefore, I put it up front [on the altar] for all who enter to see. This is one of the strongest helpers."[26] The Indian of Peace wears an outfit in the Plains Indian style, with a full-feathered headdress, a long-sleeved shirt with beaded breastplate, fringed leggings, and moccasins. On the Indian's lap Flores has placed beads, cigars, cigar papers, and segments of wood and bones (Fig. 5). Adjacent to

3 Centro of Don Miguel Flores, Espiritismo altar with *mesa blanca* (here painted blue) in the foreground, showing, in the center, plaster-cast figures of the Indian of Peace, Señora Indio, and a bust of Christ, Puente de Jobos, Guyama, Puerto Rico, photographed in June 1997 (photo: author)

4 Flores, Espiritismo altar, detail of the center section, showing that Señora Indio and the Christ figure have been moved to the same side of the Indian of Peace, photographed in February 1998 (photo: author)

El Indio de la Paz sits a plaster-cast bust of Señora Indio with a headband, wearing her straight black hair in two long braids (Fig. 4). A plaster-cast bust of Christ wearing a crown of thorns is positioned on the other side of the Indian of Peace. The altar arrangement is not fixed, and when I visited again in February 1998, the arrangement had been modified; both Señora Indio and Christ had been moved to appear at the left of the Indian of Peace (Fig. 4).

On the extreme right side of the altar is a large figurine of Saint Lazarus with his two dogs (who lick his wounds) and, in

front of him, a smaller Saint Lazarus (Fig. 3). Saint Lazarus takes on the afflictions of humanity and thus is considered a healer. Since much of Flores's practice is dedicated to healing, Lazarus is his primary assistant, and Flores wears a Saint Lazarus necklace every day. Also on the right side, in addition to flowers and candles, are figurines of various saints and Virgins, including Mary holding the baby Jesus, a Saint Barbara, and a Cuban Virgen de la Caridad del Cobre (Our Lady of Charity of [the town of] Cobre).

On the extreme left side of the altar is a cluster of black figurines that Flores calls Los Negritos or Los Congos (Fig. 6, discussed in detail below). Next to them are two Buddhas, one all red, one all black. When I inquired about the Buddhas, Flores commented, "It can be said that the Buddha is always here, on this side [pointing to the cluster of black figurines], but he is also more universal, even though he is always on this side."[27] In front of the black Buddha is a camel, which represents Arabs, and behind a candle one can make out the Three Kings. King Melchior, one of the Three Kings, is represented as a black king in most Hispanic cultures.[28] One can perceive that the "people of color" are clustered together; according to Flores they embody strong and special forces. Also on this side of the altar are candles, flowers in vases, and a few figurines of Virgins and saints. The Virgin of the Rosary is dressed entirely in white; Saint Martin wears black, and the Miraculous Virgin is in blue and white.

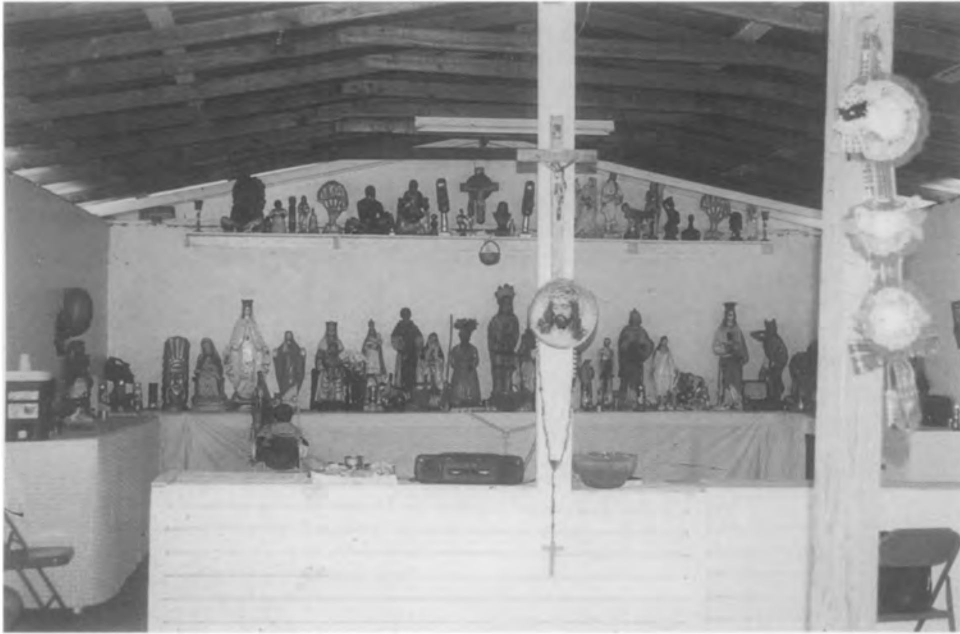
For comparison I turn to an altar belonging to Señora Rafaela Santell, also located inside a one-room Centro, the Templo de Gran Poder de Dios (the Temple of God's Great Power) (Fig. 7). This Centro is a few miles away from Flores's in Aguirre; it was Santell who initiated Flores years ago. In front of the double-tiered altar is the Kardecian-inspired free-standing *mesa blanca,* here built as a long, narrow box. The table holds a dish of water, some flowers, a small cup, and a small boom box. A post attached to the table at center front reaches to the ceiling rafters; nailed to it are a crucifix,

5 Flores, Espiritismo altar, detail of the Indian of Peace's lap, photographed in February 1998 (photo: author)

a plate with a painted bust of Christ wearing the crown of thorns, and a pendant cross.

Visually aligned with the center of the *mesa blanca,* on the lower tablelike shelf of the double-tiered altar, stands a tall plaster-cast Indian (Fig. 8). This Woodland-style Indian wears a feathered bonnet over long, straight black hair, a long-sleeved, belted shirt, from which animal tails hang, over a short overskirt, and fringed leggings. In one hand he carries a hatchet, while in the other he holds a bundle of cigars.[29] The centrality of his placement is emphasized by a bowl of water, a glass of water, and a vase of flowers in front of him, all arranged inside a circle created by a necklace of blue beads with a cross. This central section of the lower tier encompasses other goblets and glasses of water, as well as a few candles. The Indian is flanked by a figurine of a black woman, known as a *madama,* wearing a red dress and a red head scarf (turban) decorated with flowers, and figurines of Mary with the baby Jesus and the Miraculous Virgin.

6 Flores, Espiritismo altar, detail showing black figures, called Los Congos or Los Negritos, as well as a red Buddha and a black Buddha, a camel, and the three Wise Men, clustered on the left side of the altar, photographed in June 1997 (photo: author)



7 Centro of Señora Rafaela Santell, named the Temple of God's Great Power, with a double-tiered Espiritismo altar in the rear, and a *mesa blanca* in the foreground, Aguirre, Guyama, Puerto Rico, photographed in June 1997 (photo: author)

8 Santell, Espiritismo altar, detail showing the plaster-cast figure of an Indian holding a bundle of cigars in one hand and a tomahawk in the other, photographed in June 1997 (photo: author)

Santell's altar shows no specific clusters of "special forces," such as Congos, Indians, or Buddhas. Rather, on both tiers these statues are interspersed among a multitude of saints and Virgins. Many of the Indian figures are spray painted solid gold, to enable their power to radiate more forcefully (Fig. 9). To the plaster-cast figurines of black women, often associated with miniature brooms to sweep away evil, Santell adds handmade stuffed black dolls throughout the altar assemblage (Fig. 10). Known as *negrita madamas,* these dolls wear either black-and-white or red-and-white checked dresses, hoop earrings, and tied head scarves. *Madamas* are another of the generic type of spirits associated with Espiritismo.[30] The name *madama* is used as a generic term for the spirits of all non-Hispanic Afro-Caribbean women who communicate with the living.[31] *Madama* was "born to Rafaela when she was a child forty-two years ago," reported one of her helpers.[32] There are also various plaster-cast versions of *la mano poderosa* (the All-Powerful Hand) scattered on the altar. *La mano poderosa* symbolizes the wounded hand of the crucified Christ. The figurines on the tips of the fingers depict the extended Holy Family.[33]

In summary then, on Espiritismo altars, among other elements, one can usually find water-filled glasses, a small statue of a Congo,[34] the bust of an Indian, a crucifix, and a Saint Lazarus statue.[35] Succinctly, many of the "*muertos* (spirits of the dead who assist in the work) of Espiritismo were ultimately associated 'in life' with the cults of the saints of the [Catholic] church. . . ."[36] and/or with Afro-Caribbean-based religions. The Indian is one of the many generic types of

9 Santell, Espiritismo altar, detail showing a cluster of gold-painted Indians and a broom, used to cleanse the space of evil, photographed in June 1997 (photo: author)

10 Santell, Espiritismo altar, detail showing, on the left, a *madama,* dressed in red with white beads and associated with the two miniature brooms on her right, and a handmade *negrita madama* beside her, photographed in February 1998 (photo: author)

muertos that are frequently represented; others may be Congos, Buddhas, Arabs, *madamas,* or others.

Puerto Rico: The Congo and the Indian

In Puerto Rico, Espiritismo altars contain multiple images of Indians. Both leaders and devotees make contact with Indian spirits. For *espiritista* Flores, the Indian is called on when the client who is undergoing a cure needs a strong but calm helper. (To help explain his work as a medium and healer, Flores uses the phrase "cuando esa asistencia me toma," meaning that each assistant featured on the altar can assist in a healing by occupying his body. He also calls them *guías,* or guides.)[37] Indian spirits usually recommend the use of tobacco leaves, cigar smoke, ears of corn, and herbals during a cure.

On the extreme left of Flores's altar, on the side wall, hangs a plaster-cast portrait of an Indian, complete with bow. Below this figure are clustered a red and a black Buddha, a camel, a group of shiny black figures, and the Three Kings (Fig. 6). The black figures, one wearing a straw hat and the other a red bandana, emphasizing their rural origins, are known to Flores as Los Congos. He explains:

> Here is the sect of the Black Congos. They are a division apart. . . . Congos have distinct forms, like the Indians have distinct forms. You can say that their jobs are different [from the Indians] . . . but both the Indian and the Congo smoke, and both are very strong. The Virgin never smokes. She is pure.[38]

By this, Flores means that their strength differs from that of the Virgin. The Congos, the Buddhas, the camel (representing Arabs), and the Indians all are standard types of assistants, the *muertos* referred to above.

Rafaela Santell (known to her community of practitioners as Madama Rafaela) is the best-known *espiritista* in the area, with a large and complex Centro. On or around Santell's doubled-tiered altar I counted at least eight different Indian statues, including Indio Guerrero (Warrior Indian), Indio de la Paz (Indian of Peace), Indio Buena Suerte (Good-Luck Indian) and other plastic-cast Indian heads displayed on the walls (Fig. 7). Santell provides further identification of these Indians. The tall standing figure is a Taíno; the Apache wears an apron, carries a bow, and rides a horse. These are the most

11 José Bedia, detail of *Con la casa a cuestas* (With the House on My Back), installation, 1996, Porin Taidemuseum, Pori, Finland, 1996 (photo: José Bedia)

forceful Indians: "They can fight any force that is trying to invade someone."[39] Among the other statues on display are at least eleven Congos. An Indian head placed in a plastic pail on one side of the entrance door and two Indians, a Congo, a Buddha, and a cross on the other side greet visitors before they enter. Echoing Flores's explication, Santell indicated that the Congos and the Indians form a distinct category of assistants, and that they both smoke cigars, indicative of their strength and their rural origins. Indians in particular come from the *monte* (the hills, mountains, or forest).

Cuba: Espiritismo *Cruzado*, the Congo and the Indian

In Cuba there appears to have been a merging of Espiritismo with the central African–derived religion Palo Monte Mayombe. In Tata Francisco Castaneda's Palo Monte *casa-templo,* or "house temple" (Fig. 1), the *mesa blanca,* with glasses of water, is placed beneath a portrait of a Congo ancestor shown with his sacred Palo Monte iron cauldron, located in the same room as both Palo Monte and Santería altars. Many devotees of Palo Monte also include an Indian spirit in their pantheon.[40] The contemporary studio-trained Cuban-American artist José Bedia is a Palo Monte initiate. He often incorporates the Indian, one of his strongest spirit helpers, in his installations for international art exhibitions. A detail of a 1996 installation in Pori, Finland (Fig. 11), shows an Indian statue riding a large oil drum, the type used by Cuban *balseros,* or rafters, to construct their homemade rafts. This combination suggests that spiritual forces may aid the rafters on the dangerous journey across the Florida straits. David H. Brown comments that "practitioners of Palo had a consciousness of the feathered headdress," and thus the Indian merged into its iconography.[41]

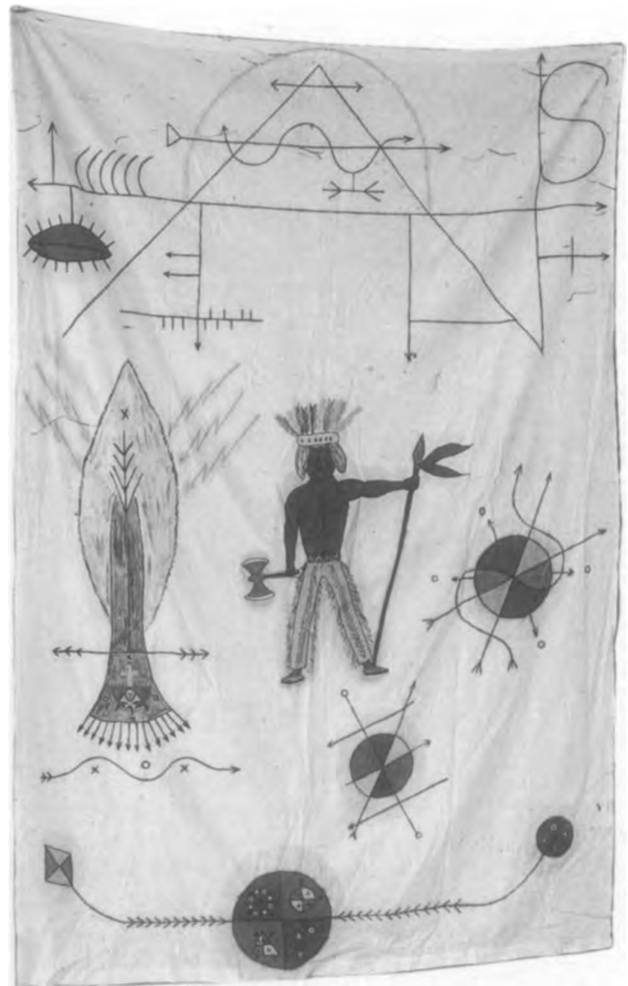
In both Espiritismo and Palo Monte a standardized representation of a Congo is used on altars and in "ancestor portraits" (Fig. 1).[42] The image of the Congo, sometimes called Francisco, may not only refer to the hardships endured by the mostly rural slave (Fig. 6) but also allude to an initiated member of Palo Monte, with its roots in the Congo. Karen McCarthy Brown has suggested that since the image of a Congo laborer is known as "Francisco, Francisca or Francesita," this construct may indeed be a reference to the French and therefore, by association, to Haitians.[43] Her suggestion is in keeping with Cuban popular thinking that equates Haitians with rural, uneducated peoples and also with rural laborers. Congo people were brought to Haiti in large numbers in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and even in Haiti, Brown remarks, "when someone does something particularly crude or clumsy a Haitian is likely to call them 'Kongo.'"[44] Here the interrelation of central African heritage, Haitian heritage, and Palo Monte religion is amply evident.

A commercially produced Indian statue, often placed on Palo Monte altars, can simultaneously connote the practitioner's Espiritismo training and Palo Monte practice. In his Havana Palo Monte temple, called Coatalima Briyumba, Tata Alberto Goicochea (now deceased) displayed a drawing of an Indian alongside his altar assemblage.[45] Nearby, in the town of Regla, David Brown documented an ornate Palo Monte altar assemblage belonging to a practitioner named Perico. Adjacent to the altar and affixed to the wall, among other religious accoutrements, were plaster-cast heads of a male and a female Indian.

There are various Espiritismo leaders in Santiago de Cuba who also include depictions of Indians among their spirit altarpieces. Espiritista Eva Fernández Bravo (now deceased) hung plaster-cast heads of a male and a female Indian on the wall to either side of the central elevated statue of Saint Lazarus, to whom the altar is dedicated. Another Espiritista, Marcia Rengifo, placed large paintings of Indians on one side of her altar (Fig. 3).

The relation of the representation of the Indian in Palo Monte and in Espiritismo is evidenced in the Palo-related paintings on cloth produced by practitioner Ludvik Reginfo Pérez (Figs. 12, 13). Reginfo calls these "the Indian of the Mountain and Warrior Indian."[46] A close reading of these paintings will help establish the role of the Indian in the package of images used in service to the religion. Reginfo makes these paintings for display and for sale and sometimes hangs them next to his altars. The designs are based on iconographies related to Palo Monte belief and incorporate numerous *firmas,* or cosmograms, which attract and honor certain Palo spirits. These *firmas* help to generate a path (a

12 Ludvik Reginfo Pérez, *Indian of the Mountain,* paint on cloth, 30 × 62 in., photographed in Havana, March 1990. Collection of the artist (photo: author)



13 Reginfo Pérez, *Indian Warrior,* paint on cloth, 22 × 46 in., photographed in Havana, March 1990. Collection of the artist (photo: author)

way, a means) by which spirits are called on to aid a practitioner. The creation of a *firma* is considered both an act of faith and an aesthetic act. In literal translation, *firma* means signature, and a cluster of *firmas* can act as a system of ideographic writing. Because they are part of a Kongo-derived religious practice, the *firmas* used by Reginfo often employ Kongo-derived references,[47] such as the circling of the sun around the earth and the Kalunga line, or horizon line, the division between heaven and earth. As Robert Farris Thompson makes quite clear in his groundbreaking analysis of Kongo cosmograms, "In Kongo there is scarcely an initiation or ritual transformation of the person from one level of existence to another that does not take its patterning from the circle of the sun about the earth."[48]

Palo *firmas* are frequently incorporated into installations, sculpture, and paintings. They communicate on two levels: as aesthetic drawings and as coded indicators of special power. The *firmas* are not sacred in and of themselves; it depends on how they are used. In Reginfo's painting *Indian of the Mountain* (Fig. 12) the Indian, one of Reginfo's spirit helpers, anchors the composition as he stands defiant on top of a mountain. His position in this work reinforces one of the connotations of the name of the religion itself—*palo* literally refers to a segment of wood or trunk of a tree, and *monte* means mountain (woods or forest). The trunk of a tree, like an Indian, stands strong and tall and is related to the earth, firmly rooted atop a mountain.

On the left is the *firma* sun, which in the Kikongo language of Congo is called *tango,* a sign of the soul or the power of light (which can connote strength and righteousness). On the right is a quartered circle, a common *firma* with multiple readings. It may be compared to the quartered circle *firma* at the bottom of Reginfo's painting *Indian Warrior* (Fig. 13). In Palo, a quartered circle can represent certain spirits and certain forces. Here, Reginfo says that it can signify the positive forces of the earth, such as the four winds.[49] Thus, the arrows emanating from these circles imply those powers.

Reginfo's explanations of his paintings underscore a very important issue. Not all of the design elements carry meaning within the Palo Monte religion. Some elements are added for aesthetic emphasis. Also, the reading of individual *firmas* may prove to be idiosyncratic; in other words, certain designs hold different meanings for different practitioners. For example, the two circular motifs at right, below the Indian in *Indian*

14 Palero Vincenton, "crossed" altar, detail showing two feathered headdresses on the top shelf, Santiago de Cuba, photographed in January 2001 (photo: author)

Warrior (Fig. 13) were added for aesthetic reasons. Yet the S-shaped *firma* at the upper right usually refers to the Palo Monte spirit known as Sarabanda. Sarabanda has been invoked to increase the Indian's power. For Reginfo, the top horizontal line with the curvilinear arrow bears the same connotation as one of the implications of the quartered circle. These are the four winds, which distribute power to the initiate. As Bárbaro Martínez-Ruiz observes in his article on classic Kongo civilizations of central Africa and their diasporas, a sequence of design units can share the same concept even as they are depicted differently, like the quartered circle discussed above.[50]

In *Indian Warrior* (Fig. 13) the initiate's main spirit helper is represented. Reginfo secures the Indian's explicit relation to Palo Monte by his proximity to the tree on the left. At the base of the tree is an iron cauldron, a *nganga,* the religion's central icon. (The spiritual leader in the Congo is named *nganga.* In Cuba, the name has been shifted to the sacred cauldron, a frequent type of transatlantic transfer. The same cauldron is included in the ancestor portrait, Fig. 1.) In service to Palo Monte the initiate accumulates power through the objects he or she deposits in the *nganga.* During one's initiation, the *nganga* must be buried at the base of a sacred tree for a specified period of days in order to collect the power of the earth, one's land, one's home. Since the Indian became a substitute for lost African ancestors (as will be discussed below), it is not surprising that the Indian and *nganga* share connotations of land and home. And the skull and crossed bones inside the *nganga* also embody these ancestors. The skull with crossed bones is a common Palo *firma.* There is also a cross inside the *nganga.* It simultaneously references a Kongo *firma,* the Kalunga line, and a Christian cross, honoring those practitioners who have been baptized.

One last Cuban example moves this discussion to a final piece of evidence, located in a discussion of the feathered headdress. In Santiago de Cuba, Palero (the name given to an initiated leader of the Palo Monte religion) Vincenton (now deceased) placed what he called "Indian headdresses" on top of his *cruzado,* or crossed, altar (Fig. 14). The feathered headdresses are embellished with Palo *firmas,* or cosmograms.[51] In style, these headdresses closely resemble those worn by the Congos of Portobelo, Panama, during their Mardi Gras celebrations (Fig. 15).[52] It is likely that both share central African historical roots.[53]

15 Carnival feathered headdress, the Congos of Portobelo, Panama, photographed in December 1999. Atlanta, Spellman College, Collection of the Art Department, gift of Arturo Lindsay (photo: author)

In the Americas, Congo religious practitioners or masqueraders wearing feathered headdresses, both in festivals and in religious imagery, were, in the popular imagination, transformed into Indians wearing feathered headdresses. This correspondence and subsequent appropriation may not have been deliberate or completely conscious. It may simply be a case of aesthetic conversion, feathers and costumes of one being substituted for feathers and costumes of another. For example, a painting of a Día de Reyes (Day of the Kings, or Epiphany) celebration in Havana, produced by Victor Patricio Landaluze in the late 1870s (Fig. 16),[54] shows a festival participant in a feathered headdress (on the right, with his back to the stairway wall). Usually identified as a masquerader in Indian costume, this may well be a central African masquerader wearing a feathered headdress in the central African style.[55]

In a publication of 1988 Robert Farris Thompson equated the use of feathers in African-influenced Caribbean festivals with a Congo aesthetic and philosophical tradition.[56] A few years later, writing about the *coboclo* (Indian) spirit in Brazil, Thompson directly associated the *nganga*-like headdresses used in Brazilian Umbanda rituals as "recoded Amerind."[57] I agree that in many cases central African masqueraders were redesignated as Indians. Nonetheless, scholars should be very

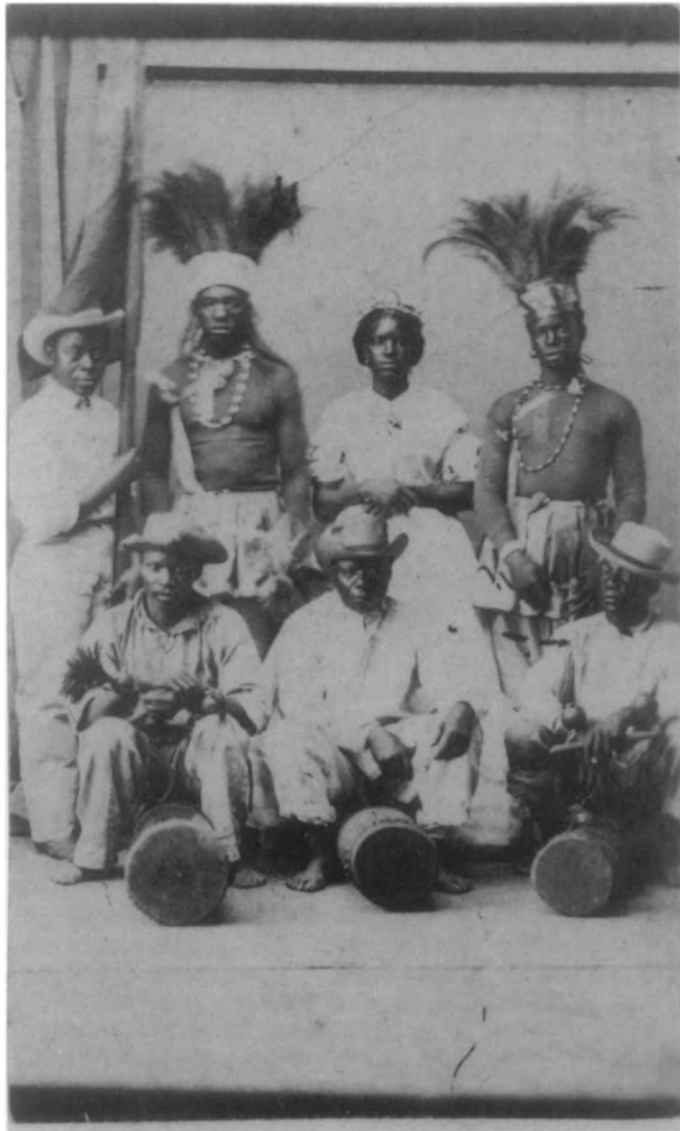
16 Victor Patricio Landaluze, *El Día de Reyes*, oil on canvas, 12 × 21 in., ca. 1878. Havana, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes

careful when applying this example to other examples in the Americas. Certainly, not all feathered headdresses worn by descendants of Africans in the Americas relate to central African roots. But in the case of the Congos of Portobelo, Panama, and masquerade participants in Cuba, a complex of central African signs, like the presence of tubular, single-headed Congo-Cuban-style drums on the right in the Landaluze painting, contribute to my hypothesis. These same drums appear in a *carte de visite* (business card or calling card) produced in Havana, in the studio of Charles DeForest Fredricks, who established his studio there in 1857 (Fig. 17).[58] It presents a key piece of evidence central to my argument that the Congo masquerader in feather headdress merged with the popular image of an Indian in feathered headdress.

In the photograph, almost certainly picturing a Congo *cabildo* (a mutual-aid/religious society) from Havana, the subjects are Afro-Cuban or perhaps African. It is quite possible that the photograph from Havana documents festival (masquerade) participants, for during Día de Reyes celebrations on January 6, such as the one depicted by Landaluze (Fig. 16) mentioned above, Afro-Cuban *cabildos*, led by a queen (the grouping under the umbrella in the Landaluze painting) and standard-bearer (the man holding the flag in the *carte de visite*), often paraded publicly, seizing the opportunity to display *cabildo* authority. The photograph was obviously produced in a studio setting. The individuals pose in front of a solid background and a drape has been pulled over to the left. It is probable that the photograph was intended to be used as a "picturesque" postcard from Havana, sold to tourists during either Día de Reyes or Carnaval celebrations (most often held in February in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries). In this form tourists could take home a memento of the parades and dances staged by Afro-Cuban *cabildos*.

While it is difficult to assess to what degree the photographer was responsible for the staging of this scene, the arrangement of figures and accoutrements attests to a specialized knowledge of *cabildo* practices, suggesting active participation on the part of the subjects.[59] For example, a characteristic mode of drum playing in central Africa is to sit astride a prone drum while beating the head with hands and heeling the head to create tension. Thus, the drummers in the photograph may have determined their own position. In addition, for musicians and masqueraders to surround a *cabildo* queen during street processions was (and is) a common choreographic arrangement. I have documented many carnival groups in Santiago de Cuba that still perform in this spatial arrangement, with their standard-bearer leading the procession.

A close reading of the image yields additional important information. The queen, in the center, wears a floor-length European-style dress and a tiara. In front of her sit three drummers astride their drums, which are placed on the floor of the studio. The drums appear to be cylindrical and long. They surely resemble Congo-style drums known in Cuba as *yuka* drums. The drummers at either end have rattles, or *maracas*, attached to each wrist. (In the Landaluze painting, Fig. 16, again note the long, tubular drums.) The drummers on the extreme right and left hold some interesting objects. The drummer on the left holds a feathered object, the one on the right a stick. Both of these drummers are wearing long strands of beads, which may be initiation necklaces. The



17 Attributed to the Havana studio of C. D. Fredricks y Daries, *carte de visite*, 2⅛ × 3½ in., ca. 1860. The New York Public Library, Carte de Visite Collection, Photographs and Prints Division, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Astor, Lenox, and Tilden Foundations

central drummer does not appear to be holding anything. These three drummers, along with the flag bearer on the extreme left, holding the *cabildo*'s flag, are dressed in European-style pants, shirts, and hats.

There are two more individuals in this photo, the two men standing on either side of the queen. Both are wearing feathered headdresses, made from a tight-fitting band around the head and upright feathers. Each wears a strand or strands of beads and each has on a tight-fitting, almost skin-tight, long-sleeved, neckless shirt. From our view of the individual on the right, we can surmise that both are probably wearing long, full pants, or a long, straight skirt, with an apron-length overskirt made from panels of fabric that hang from the waist. The man on the right holds an unidentifiable object in his left hand.

Art historian Elisabeth Cameron, who has done extensive fieldwork in central Africa, comments that the long-sleeved and tight-fitting shirts in the Cuban photograph resemble, in their fit and style, costumes worn by masqueraders in the *mukanda* (men's circumcision) complex throughout the central African area. She also notes that the stick held by the drummer on the right resembles pairs of sticks used in certain rituals and called "the bones of the ancestor."[60] Robert Farris Thompson underscores this interpretation by commenting that in Cuba "the players of proto-conga drums *bangoma* often tied wrist-rattles to their hands."[61] Marc Leo Felix elaborates on the *mukanda* costume, indicating that it can consist of "a shirt, skirt, gloves, leggings, made from fibre, hide, bark, or cloth . . ."[62] and that the masquerader uses "bells or rattles attached to [his] costume or held in his hands."[63] Although in central Africa these costumes are most often made from knotted or crocheted netting, it is quite possible, indeed, probable, that in Cuba store-bought costume elements or elements made from mass-produced cloth were substituted. Cameron offers a conclusion by commenting that the combination of elements in the photo "together resemble a cross between a *nganga*'s costume and a masquerade costume."[64] This mixture of European-style and African-style dress reflects the same aesthetic hybridity as the Espiritismo altars discussed earlier.

If the dating of the photograph to the 1860s or even the 1870s is correct, it strengthens the theory that it shows Día de Reyes masqueraders, as Día de Reyes public celebrations were quite strong during these decades and had become a major tourist attraction. These specifically Afro-Cuban public celebrations were declared illegal in the mid-1880s, although Carnaval celebrations continued. These masqueraders may well be members of a Congo *cabildo* who have agreed to be photographed in one of Havana's best-known photography studios. The photograph could have been used on a postcard or sold as a souvenir *carte de visite*. During the 1860s Havana, among other Caribbean locations, became a popular tourist destination. Havana was a port of call for ships from both Key West and New Orleans. At the same time, boats from Africa continued to deliver slaves to Cuba. According to the statistics compiled by the British Commissioners in Havana, in 1860 alone 24,895 Africans were brought to that country.[65]

The probability that Africans, in addition to Afro-Cubans, paraded in both Día de Reyes and Carnaval celebrations is quite strong and underscores the possibility of a distinct African source for the feathered headdress. The headdress with upright feathers, worn in Havana in the mid-1800s, is strikingly similar to ones from central Africa. This particular headdress style is worn by central African spiritual leaders and can be seen on *minkisi* statues (*minkisi* is plural for *nkisi*, a spirit personality controlling particular activities) collected between 1885 and 1920, during the era of colonial occupation of central Africa. In fact, such a statue wearing a feathered headdress was acquired in 1893 by the Staatliches Museum für Völkerkunde, Munich, from the collection of the Bavarian agronomist F. Martin, who collected it in Mayombe, a region in lower Zaire.[66] (It is no coincidence that the religious designation Palo Monte Mayombe is common in Cuba.) This same style headdress is worn by the *nkisi* figure in the Stanley Collection at the University of Iowa (Fig. 18), and a feathered "hat for [a] Nganga Nkisi Mabyaala Ma Ndenbe,"

18 *Nkisi* figure (power figure), Kongo peoples, Democratic Republic of Congo, height 11¼ in. (29 cm). Iowa City, The University of Iowa Museum of Art, The Stanley Collection, x1986.508 (photo: Richard Beaulieux)

19 Feathered hat for a *nganga nkisi mabyaala ma ndenbe,* or Kongo ritual specialist, height 5½ in. Rotterdam, Wereld-museum, acc. no. 10634, donated 1906 (photo: Erik Hesmerg Sneek)

a Kongo ritual specialist, entered the Museum voor Volkenkunde, Rotterdam, before 1906 (Fig. 19).[67]

These objects and dates help to establish the possibility of stylistic links between the Cuban Congo feathered headdresses and ones from central Africa, for slaves from this area entered Cuba until the slave trade ended there in the 1880s. These dates also underscore the historical possibility that first practitioners of Palo Monte and then practitioners of Espiritismo were aware of the similarity between certain Indian and certain African stylistic characteristics, such as the feathered headdress. The African wearing a feathered headdress and a statue of a man adorned with a similar headdress came to signify and embody powerful spirit forces. Thus, this correspondence most likely led to the incorporation of the commercially available and popular Indian figures on altars.

Given the significance of Congo culture in Cuba, it is not surprising that the individuals in the *carte de visite* are wearing important headdresses related to spiritual beliefs. A Congo source for the feathered headdress and the costume elements, including a tight-fitting, long-sleeved shirt, an apron-like overskirt, and longer pants, is quite probable. And when this Congo tradition collided with the Amerindian tradition in the Americas, the resulting costume would have created a true Afro-Creole mix.[68] To underscore my initial proposal, it is important to recall that Congos and Indians are intimately associated in Espiritismo practice and related altar arts. This collision and consequent melding of Congo aesthetics and style with Amerindian ones resonates in many forms in other African Diaspora cultural traditions.[69]

New Orleans

In the above discussion of the *carte de visite* from Havana, I noted that there was frequent boat service between Havana and New Orleans during the second half of the nineteenth century. Recently, other avenues of communication between Cuba and New Orleans have come to light. As one musicologist declared:

> One of the first pioneering bands of New Orleans was sent to Cuba during the Spanish-American War [as were black soldiers from New Orleans] and spent time there playing for the troops. You could date the evolution of marching brass band music playing in New Orleans into what we call jazz to the return of those musicians from Cuba in 1901. The polyrhythms got to them.[70]

The link between New Orleans and Havana may also be responsible, in part, for the rise and popularity of another important New Orleans institution, the Mardi Gras Indians (the name for the African-Americans who appropriate and embellish Indian-style costumes and then perform during Mardi Gras celebrations). The first documented Indian mas-

querade band appeared in the mid- to late 1880s.[71] This coincided with the establishment of numerous prohibitions against public masquerades and celebrations by African-Americans performing as themselves. They were not allowed to march and perform without costumes, and their costume choice had to conform to white fantasies, such as those of the Indian or the famous New Orleans Zulu tribes. The link with Mardi Gras Indian music and perhaps with the Mardi Gras Indian tradition itself is of enormous potential significance in sorting through the multiple historical strands that combined to elevate the Indian in the practices of the Spiritual Church in New Orleans.[72] The dates for the beginning of Mardi Gras Indian bands and the dates of the florescence of Caribbean Kardecian-inspired Espiritismo in New Orleans overlap. As Samuel Kinser remarks:

> The written accounts of whites help situate the beginnings of black-Indian masking and suggest its connection to the suppression of the more frankly African forms of festive merriment traditional until then. But they are of no aid in illuminating the semiotic sources. We have already indicated that these sources are Caribbean in many details; others probably represent a much adapted African heritage without any necessary Caribbean intermediary; others still seem to be adapted from white images of Indians.[73]

The association of the generic Indian with the practice of Spiritism throughout the Americas is well documented. Practitioners of nineteenth-century North American Spiritism frequently contacted the spirits of Indians, such as White Eagle, Red Cloud, White Hawk, and Black Hawk. Anthropologist Stephen Wehmeyer asserts that Indians were depicted in illustrations in magazines such as *Telegraph Papers* and *Banner of Light*.[74] However, there is no evidence to suggest that these Indian spirits were represented in associated altar art in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries—with the exception of those altars related to one specific practice in New Orleans.

Mother Leafy Anderson is considered by many scholars and New Orleans practitioners to be the "founder" of the mainly African-American New Orleans Spiritual Church.[75] Her strong reputation and direct association with the New Orleans Spiritual movement has created some unnecessary confusion regarding the incorporation of the Indian in religious services in New Orleans. Mother Anderson's association with an Indian spirit guide, known to her as Black Hawk,[76] has also complicated our understanding of the role of the Indian in the practice of the religion. The services led by Mother Anderson included songs, readings, prayers, prophecies, and healings. Special spiritual forces or guides would assist her in this work, and most prominent among them was one she identified as Black Hawk. The first time this name appeared in print associated with Mother Anderson was in 1926, at least five years after she began services in New Orleans. In that year a convention of Eternal Life Christian Spiritualist Church members from "Illinois, Florida, Texas, and elsewhere met at her church in New Orleans."[77] Certainly, New Orleans Spiritual Church members venerate Black Hawk, but I believe scholars have incorrectly associated that Black Hawk with the Sauk (Algonguin or northern Woodlands) chief and warrior Black Hawk.[78] The Sauk chief was the subject of the well-known paintings of George Catlin and the portrait by John Wesly Jarvis. Both artists worked in the 1830s, and this Black Hawk, their subject, died in 1838. Yet there is another Black Hawk, an Oglala Lakota with a direct connection to New Orleans.

Although the evidence remains circumstantial, I suggest that the Black Hawk whose name Mother Anderson adopted was probably the Lakota chief who performed with Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show.[79] The Lakota, more commonly known as the Sioux, are the most famous of the Plains Indians. They became widely known when touring with Buffalo Bill Cody and his Wild West Show, from 1883 to 1917. As Marsha C. Bol comments, "So large were the number of Lakota recruited that their absence was felt by the entire community. Chief Red Fox recalled, in 1893, that 'one hundred and twenty Sioux Indians from the Pine Ridge reservation left the reservation to join the show.'"[80] Cody and his troupe spent the winter season of 1884–85 in New Orleans, and Mother Anderson might have read or heard about Black Hawk's exploits through publications associated with the Wild West Show. Perhaps this is the same Lakota Black Hawk whose book of seventy-six drawings has been studied by art historian Janet Catherine Berlo. Berlo cautions in her text, "Many Indian names, including Black Hawk's, occur in different tribes and at different times."[81]

Newspaper articles of the period mention Black Hawk as one of four spirit guides introduced by Mother Anderson and comment that the "powerful Indian guide takes control of Mrs. Leafy Anderson"[82] and that she actually "performed in the spirit's voice. . . ."[83] Jason Berry, relying on information obtained during interviews conducted by the Federal Writers Project after Mother Anderson's death, notes that she wore a "mantle" bearing the image of Black Hawk, and that Black Hawk had first come to her in a vision she had while working in Chicago.[84] Yet the only specific Black Hawk Spiritual Churches are in New Orleans, and Black Hawk is not specifically mentioned as associated with her practice until she became a church leader in New Orleans. Did this "mantle" as described by her disciples in the Church resemble the "costume" worn by the Mardi Gras Indians of New Orleans, which often bears a beaded image of an Indian?[85] By the time Mother Anderson was specifically identified with Black Hawk, the Indian had been represented in Mardi Gras celebrations for about forty years.[86] Clearly, these complicated crisscross borrowings follow many paths. In describing a few Black Hawk services that they visited in the late 1980s, Claude Jacobs and Andrew Kaslow remark,

> A number of blacks dress as Indians during Mardi Gras, and a woman who is a member of the church borrows the ornaments from her brother, who is in one of these "tribes." At one service a minister donned the carnival outfit of another man who is a Mardi Gras Indian and then summoned the spirits of Black Hawk and Reverend Adams to the gathering. . . .[87]

There was and certainly still is an intimate relation between members of the New Orleans Spiritual Church and members of Mardi Gras Indian tribes.

It seems that the identification of the Indian guide in New Orleans Spiritual practice as Black Hawk is particular to Mother Leafy Anderson and her followers. The image of the Indian on altars associated with Espiritismo or Spiritual Churches in New Orleans, like that of the Congo, is most often a generic representation.[88] The use of the generic representation of an Indian in African-American Spiritual Churches can be understood as reflecting the appropriated power and spirituality admired and sought after by church members.

All the above evidence underscores the fact that elements from central African and Native American cultures both meld and parallel one another. Indians are fundamental to the practice of Spiritism or Espiritismo in the Americas. The challenging question is how and why particular beliefs and iconographies that resonate strongly with certain Caribbean practices may have influenced the practice of New Orleans Spiritual Churches. Did the probable presence of Africans from the area of the Congo, or even Haiti, for that matter, provide yet another inspiration for New Orleans African-Americans to form Mardi Gras Indian bands and become members of Spiritual Churches? The answer may lie in archival research, particularly ships' archives regarding immigration and/or travel into New Orleans from the Caribbean in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. With all this evidence in mind, I strongly agree with Stephen Wehmeyer's assertion that the Indian may well be a "substitute-image," in both the Caribbean and New Orleans, which ultimately references Congo ancestors.[89]

A Pan-Caribbean Style

What I have here inserted into the discussion of the representation of the Indian in both masquerades and on altars associated with Spiritism and Espiritismo is some historical specificity. This may clarify both a late-nineteenth-century Congo (central African) presence in the Caribbean and communication among various Caribbean locales, such as Cuba, Puerto Rico, and New Orleans, creating a pan-Caribbean style.[90] Sara Johnson-La O makes a similar analogy using musical evidence from an earlier period that was strongly affected by the successful revolution in St-Domingue. She writes about the connections among Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, and Martinique in proposing an "inter-island musical aesthetic," which forged "an experiential pan-Caribbean cognizance of unity [that was] being performed as early as the late eighteenth century by musicians and their adepts, making music a cultural avant-garde that was at the forefront of breaking colonial and linguistic barriers."[91]

In the course of this essay I have analyzed specific elements on altars dedicated to the practice of Espiritismo that are indigenous to the Americas. In order to better grasp the significance of these elements I have also referenced other African-based Caribbean religions, like Palo Monte and Santería, and social structures, like the *cabildo.* All these elements—the Virgin, Christ, Catholic saints, the Indian, and the Congo—combine to produce an organic whole, which functions quite well in the lives of the devotees but often gives significant pause to the outside investigator. Cuban-American scholar Antonio Benítez-Rojo posed an important methodological question that informs my work and the conclusions I reach in this essay: "Why pursue a Euclidian coherence that the world, and the Caribbean above all, is far from having?"[92] In his analysis of plural Caribbean religions, Benítez-Rojo uses the constructs "transgressive trope" and "promiscuous forms" and contends that these idioms best represent the Caribbean. He asserts, "A scientific model applied to investigate Caribbean societies and to predict their movements and tendencies would turn out to be grossly inadequate if it were to try to do without the input of beliefs formed under the African cultural impact."[93]

The confluence of the representation of the Congo and the representation of the Indian occurs on both the altar assemblages dedicated to Espiritismo and those to Palo Monte. Yet, at times, the Congo and the Indian assert their presence in parallel positions, rather than confluent ones, as they exist side by side on the altars. Practitioners repeatedly underscore the notion of ancestor, land, and home that these images embody. But the outside scholar who searches only for single interpretations and secure conclusions is cheated. These polyglot altars best come to life in their complexity.

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Notes

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1. The religious practice I am describing in this essay is known as Spiritism in English and Espiritismo in Spanish. A similar but not identical practice in the United States is known as Spiritualism, and the New Orleans's institution I discuss is the Spiritual Church.
2. Celeste Olalquiaga. *Megalopolis: Contemporary Cultural Sensibilities* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992), 38–39.
3. Ibid., 41.
4. Here I am referring to the early writings of Clement Greenberg and his followers. I agree that perceiving kitsch as a concept and studying the content and context of objects and environments subsumed under its umbrella can direct our attention to the too common art historical premise that authentic objects are better than nonauthentic, or reproduced, ones and therefore merit more serious attention. For an extensive discussion and documentation of Greenberg's influence regarding

the devaluation of kitsch, see Celeste Olalquiaga, *The Artificial Kingdom: A Treasury of Kitsch Experience* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1998).

5. Gerardo Mosquera, introduction to *Beyond the Fantastic: Contemporary Art Criticism from Latin America* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1996), 14.

6. As evidenced by an otherwise insightful and significant article by Sally M. Promey, "The 'Return' of Religion in the Scholarship of American Art," *Art Bulletin* 35 (2003): 581–603, in the United States the arts associated with certain hybrid religious practices with a strong African-derived base have yet to receive serious art historical attention. If scholarship on these practices is available, it is most often skipped over. Promey describes a working seminar (1995–2000) convened to explore "various methods for the analysis and interpretation of the visual culture of religions, investigating what the study of religion might bring to historical understandings of images and objects in the United States and what visual culture studies might offer to the historical understanding of American religions" (590). She also discusses the related publication *The Visual Culture of American Religions*, ed. David Morgan and Sally M. Promey (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001). In neither case are significant religious practices such as Santería mentioned, nor is the groundbreaking scholarship of Robert Farris Thompson cited. Thompson's many publications began coming out in the 1970s, although the specific work that has the potential to influence Promey, as well as other scholars, is the book and related touring exhibition *Face of the Gods: Art and Altars of Africa and the African Americas* (New York: Museum for African Art; Munich: Prestel, 1993). While it is commendable that Promey and her associates included or referenced trends that "have been so influential as to warrant special mention" (p. 591), such as a study of Elvis culture including Elvis altars and shrines and a look at Lakota Sun Dance paintings, religious production from other sectors, particularly those with a strong African-derived foundation, are completely omitted. Among other factors, the sheer number of practitioners living in the United States makes this omission especially unfortunate.

7. Néstor García Canclini, "Modernity after Postmodernity," in Mosquera, *Beyond the Fantastic*, 38–39. In Cuba and Puerto Rico, there is a growing attempt to call the religions discussed here "noninstitutionalized religions." While this phrase is certainly preferable to the more common label "magical practices" and related terms, these religions are in fact institutionalized, with rules, hierarchies, legitimate histories, genealogies, and so on. The phrase "noninstitutionalized" therefore serves only to distinguish them from other well-known established religions.

8. Olalquiaga, *Megalopolis*, 241.

9. I would like to comment briefly on the way this present work enlarges my approach to the study of Caribbean visual culture. Over the past twenty years I have written about various intra-Caribbean connections, based on close readings of visual documents, be they lithographs, choreographic styles, costumes, or even certain musical instruments, their playing styles, and their names. My conclusions are based on fieldwork interviews, photographic evidence (both contemporary and from the early twentieth century), and art historical analysis. This approach yielded significant results in my study of the pan-Caribbean festival performances, which included the character known as Indian. Similarly, a close reading of I. M. Belisario's 1837 lithograph *French-Sets*, based on an 1836 street performance in Kingston, Jamaica, provided me with ample evidence of the verisimilitude of his title. For this present study I rely on art historical methodology, combining formal and social analysis. I am confident that future archival research will further elucidate my conclusions.

10. "Mayombe" is derived from Yombe, the name of an ethnic group from northern Congo, central Africa. See Judith Bettelheim, "Palo Monte Mayombe and Its Influence on Cuban Contemporary Art," *African Arts* 34, no. 2 (summer 2001): 36–49, 94.

11. Karen McCarthy Brown, e-mail message to the author, August 24, 2003.

12. Señora Rafaela Santell, in discussion with the author, Aguirre, Guyama, Puerto Rico, March 2, 1998.

13. The Spiritist Federation was founded in 1903 in Puerto Rico; see Mario A. Núñez Molina, "Community Healing among Puerto Ricans: Espiritismo as a Therapy for the Soul," in *Healing Cultures: Art and Religion as Curative Practices in the Caribbean and Its Diaspora*, ed. Margarite Fernández Olmos and Lizabeth Paravisini-Gebert (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 117. In Brazil, "Kardecist groups were organized in Bahia in 1865 and in Rio in 1873"; see Lisias Nogueira-Negrao, "Kardecism," in *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, vol. 8 (New York: Macmillan, 1987), 260. There is even a center in Caracas called Alain Kardec; see Angelina Pollak-Eltz, "Magico-Religious Movements and Social Change in Venezuela," *Journal of Caribbean Studies* 2, nos. 2–3 (autumn–winter 1981): 168.

14. In both Puerto Rico and Cuba, Espiritismo became part of the movement against Spanish colonialism. In Cuba this struggle included the Ten Years War, 1868–78; the "Little War," 1879–80; and the War of Independence, beginning in 1895 and continuing until the official Spanish-American War of 1898. It was during the Spanish-American War that United States troops occupied both Cuba and Puerto Rico and it was also during this period that increased Cuban–Puerto Rican interchange occurred. (The occupation lasted until 1902, and was renewed from 1906 to 1909.) There was another important development during this period, one that also may have connected religious practices in Cuba (and Puerto Rico) to similar practices in New Orleans, which I discuss below. I quote Aline Helg: "In the upper strata of Cuba Libre, however, many rebels were Freemasons: Antonio and José Maceo, José Martí, Máximo Gómez, and Bartolomé Masó, to name a few. While in exile in the United States, some had been initiated as Oddfellows; others had joined Cuban lodges in Florida and New York. Most belonged to the Grand Orient of Cuba and the Antilles, an irregular masonry that professed independence and racial equality. . . . More lodges were created during the war, and many insurgent officers were initiated." Helg, *Our Rightful Share: The Afro-Cuban Struggle for Equality, 1886–1912* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 64–65. The importance of Masons and Masonic ritual has only begun to be studied as it relates to Afro-Cuban practices, including Palo Monte and Espiritismo, and communication among Caribbean peoples in different locations.

15. See Núñez Molina, "Community Healing among Puerto Ricans," for an excellent discussion of this aspect of Espiritismo in Puerto Rico.

16. George Brandon, *Santería from Africa to the New World* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), 87.

17. Ibid.

18. David H. Brown, "Altared Spaces, Afro-Cuban Religions and the Urban Landscape in Cuba and the United States," in *Gods of the City*, ed. Robert A. Orsi (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), 160.

19. Raul Canizares, *Walking with the Night: The Afro-Cuban World of Santería* (Rochester, Vt.: Destiny Books, 1993), 75.

20. See Anna Wexler, "Dolls and Healing in a Santería House," in Fernández Olmos and Paravisini-Gebert, *Healing Cultures*, 90.

21. Ibid.

22. Amalia Mesa-Bains, "Spiritual Visions in Contemporary Art," in *Images and Histories: Chicana Altar-Inspired Art*, ed. Constance Cortez (Medford, Mass.: Tufts University; Santa Clara, Calif.: Santa Clara University, 1999).

23. Don Miguel Flores, in discussions with the author, Puente de Jobos, Guyama, Puerto Rico, June 29, 1997, and February 28, 1998. Professor Mildred Rivera-Martínez, a colleague who participated with me in the seminars sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities held at the University of Puerto Rico during those dates, assisted me. As evidenced by all the altars under discussion, as I stated earlier, the practice of Espiritismo results in a negotiated (cross-pollinated) terrain between Santería or Palo Monte and Kardecian Spiritism. While it is quite possible to analyze the Santería-based or Palo-based altar offerings, that is not my purpose in this article.

24. According to David Brown, in a telephone conversation with the author, July 3, 2001, the crucifix is included on these altars to pay homage to all Christian worshipers who have been baptized. See Brown, "Altared Spaces," 184–86, for a more detailed discussion of the white table.

25. These chromolithographs are the only ones available locally and underscore the importance of Santería-derived imagery in the Americas. Many are printed in Mexico.

26. Don Miguel Flores, in discussion with the author, Aguirre, Guyama, Puerto Rico, March 2, 1998.

27. Ibid.

28. According to David Brown, Melchior served as the preferred spiritual power of some of Cuba's African nations, particularly the *cabildos* (mutual-aid/religious societies) of the Royal Congos. Brown, *Santería Enthroned: Art, Ritual, and Innovation in an Afro-Cuban Religion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 46.

29. A necklace of red and white beads has been placed on the Indian, which would reference the deity Changó in Santería practice. I neglected to ask Santell about this necklace.

30. I would like to point out that on Flores's altar, nestled in front of the large red Buddha, are three *madamas*, a gift from Santell.

31. Angela Jorge, "La Madama Francesita: A New World Black Spirit," in *Global Dimensions of the African Diaspora*, ed. Joseph E. Harris (Washington, D.C.: Howard University Press, 1993), 207. I counted at least ten different black *madamas* on Santell's altar. Aside from the attributes already mentioned, *madamas* are associated with fans, brooms, red cloth, shells, nine or seven colored kerchiefs tied together, tobacco leaves, and cigars.

32. Interviews by author (as in n. 12).

33. *Colonial Art from Puerto Rico, Selections from the Gift of Teodoro Vidal*, exh. cat., National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washignton, D.C., 1997, n.p.

34. Responding to a request to describe a "Congo doll," Steve Quintana said it was "a man sitting down on a chair. . . . And the figure was sitting down, one hand open, the other holding something. You could place the cigar, a fruit, a vegetable, a stick of *guayaba*, a stick of wood in there. He always had a cane leaning on the chair, and when they wanted to call him, they used the cane," quoted in Wexler, "Dolls and Healing in a Santería House," 95.

35. For a discussion of the crucifix, see Bettelheim, "Palo Monte Mayombe"; and a related explanation in Brown, "Altared Spaces," 160.

36. Brown, "Altared Spaces," 182.

37. Flores, in discussion with author, June 29, 1997, and February 28, 1998. Flores's meetings with devotees are called *velades*, most often translated as séances.

38. Ibid.

39. Santell, in discussion with author, 1998.

40. The artist José Bedia, who is an initiated participant in Palo Monte, explained to me that there has always been a consciousness among Palo Monte devotees that they should pay respect to the Indian. Some *paleros* (initiates who have reached a position of leadership) even wear Indian tattoos. Once, while I was waiting in a bank line in Miami, I noticed that the Afro-Cuban standing in front of me (I heard him talking to a friend and therefore knew he was Cuban) was wearing a very large diamond-studded ring in the image of an Indian. As I became more conscious of this special accoutrement, I noticed other men in Miami with similar rings. Bedia explained that it had become fashionable among *paleros* there.

41. David Brown, in a telephone conversation with the author, July 2, 2001. Bedia, in discussion with author, Miami, 1993.

42. Unfortunately, many authors are so Santería-centric in their work that they fail to embrace the possibility that Palo Monte, with its central African heritage, may have also contributed to the crossed nature of Cuban religious practice. For example, Canizares, *Walking with the Night*, 78, attributes the presence of spirit guides such as Lucumí (Yoruba), Congo spirits, Plains Indians, and gypsies to Santería alone.

43. Karen McCarthy Brown, e-mail message to the author, August 14, 2003. Kristine Junker, a doctoral candidate at Columbia University who is studying Espiritismo in Havana, agrees that the designations Francisco and Francisca ultimately reference Haitians (personal communication, October 22, 2003).

44. K. Brown, e-mail message, August 14, 2003. See also n. 47 below.

45. The honorary titles of Tata and Madre Nganga appearing in this paragraph are designations within the Palo Monte religion that signify an initiated member who has reached a leadership role. See Bettelheim, "Palo Monte Mayombe."

46. Ludvik Reginfo Pérez, in discussion with the author, July 1989.

47. Kongo spelled with a K refers to the "unitary civilization by which Bakongo (the Kongo people) themselves refer to their traditional territory and way of life. Congo with a 'C' essentially refers to shifting political developments." Robert Farris Thompson and Joseph Cornet, *The Four Moments of the Sun: Kongo Art in Two Worlds* (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1981), 27.

48. Thompson, in Thompson and Cornet, *Four Moments of the Sun*, 43.

49. Reginfo, in discussion with the author, 1989.

50. Bárbaro Martínez-Ruiz, "Mambo Comes from the Soul," in *Call and Response, Journeys in African Art*, exh. cat., Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, 2000, 107.

51. I met Palero Vincenton through researchers associated with Casa del Caribe in Santiago de Cuba. His practice is very complex and crossed. In front of these headdresses are two miniature reproductions of Abakuá *íreme*, the Afro-Cuban brotherhood that Vincenton was also honoring.

52. On the invitation of Professor Arturo Lindsay, I visited Portobelo, Panama, for Mardi Gras in 2000. Lindsay collected this headdress in Portobelo and I photographed it at Spellman College, where he teaches.

53. See Judith Bettelheim, "Carnaval of Los Congos in Portobelo, Panama," in *African Diasporas in the New and Old Worlds*, ed. Genevieve Fabre and Klaus Benesch (Amsterdam: Rodopi Press, 2004). See below for a discussion of these headdresses and central African styles.

54. Victor Patricio Landaluze, 1828–1889, arrived in Havana from Spain in 1850 and died in Havana. His many paintings of Afro-Cuban festivals and ceremonies provide a rich source of information, especially since many scholars attest to the accuracy of his depictions.

55. For a related discussion, see D. Brown, *Santería Enthroned*, 48–49. For comparison, see similar performers with feathered headdresses in the *carte de visite* (Fig. 17) discussed below.

56. Robert Farris Thompson, "Recapturing Heaven's Glamour: Afro-Caribbean Festivalizing Arts," in *Caribbean Festival Arts*, ed. Judith Bettelheim and John Nunley (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1988), 17.

57. Thompson, *Face of the Gods*, 190. In Kongo culture *nganga* is the title of a spiritual leader. In Cuba, it is the name given to the sacred cauldron of Palo Monte.

58. This *carte de visite* is in the collection of the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, New York. It was acquired from photography dealer H. L. Hoffenberg in 1982, from the original collection of Ramiro A. Fernandez. I first saw it published in *Salon and Picturesque Photography in Cuba, 1860–1920*, exh. cat., Daytona Beach Museum, Daytona Beach, Fla., 1988. The photograph was originally printed as a *carte de visite*; the image measures 2⅛ by 3½ inches, and the *carte* itself is 3⅜ by 5 5/16 inches. Handwritten on the back of the image is the following notation: "Black Musicians with initiates and Bata Drummers, Havana c. 1860." According to the Schomberg's official listing, the photograph is of "Cuban musicians with initiates and *bata* drummers." Both name the photographer as "C. D. Fredricks y Daries." In the Daytona Beach Museum publication the caption reads: "Cuban-African Initiate with Dato Drummers and Dancers." Compounding the errors, the photographer is listed as C. D. Fredricks, and the size of the photograph is printed as 13⅝ by 9⅝ inches.
 The caption from the Daytona Beach Museum publication is incorrect. To the best of my knowledge there is no such designation as "*dato* drummers and dancers" in either Cuba or in Africa. Furthermore, I seriously call into question the attribution of "*bata* drummers" in the other identifications. Again, to the best of my knowledge, the drums photographed bear no resemblance to Yoruba or Yoruba-derived *bata* drums. As for the attribution of the photographer to C. D. Fredricks or Fredricks y Daries, this, too, needs some explanation, which may help in identifying the individuals, or at least the mise-en-scène, in the photograph. By the mid-1850s, Charles DeForest Fredricks (1823–1894) had become one of the leading commercial photographers in all the Americas. His headquarters were in New York City, and he had affiliate studios in Uruguay, Argentina, Brazil, and Cuba. In 1857 he sent some staff members to Havana and established a branch studio there at 108 Calle de Habana. His staff photographed panoramas of Havana that were included in the February 27, 1869, issue of *Harper's Weekly*, dedicated to the Cuban Revolution. See William S. Johnson, *Nineteenth-Century Photography: An Annotated Bibliography 1839–1879* (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1990). The name "Daries" referred to above was Fredricks's Havana partner.
 Robert M. Levine published a 1990 monograph on Fredricks's work in Havana. Levine's work documents and discusses a book of albumen photographs in the collection of H. L. Hoffenberg, some dating to early 1855. Levine contends that the three dozen photographs in this book were probably taken by employees of the Havana studio, not by Fredricks himself. Fredricks's studio accepted commissions from many Cuban and non-Cuban patrons and perhaps occasionally produced *cartes de visite* for commercial distribution at a profit. As Levine indicates, "the mass-produced *carte de visite* innovative process was introduced in France in 1859, and millions were manufactured in the 1860s." Levine, *Cuba in the 1850s through the Lens of Charles DeForest Fredricks* (Tampa: University of South Florida Press, 1990), 28. The reproduction of modestly priced studio portraits was done for profit. Of all the prints included in Levine's publication, there is none of indoor studio photography, such as the photograph in question. And so far, I have seen only one other indoor shot from Cuba out of the Fredricks's studio. That is one of members of the Cuban Photographic Society, Fredricks included, which may point to the possibility that *cabildo* members commissioned this *carte de visite*. This *carte de visite* is a very important historical document and writers should be aware of incorrect previously published information.

59. Indeed, the employees at Fredricks's Havana studio may have seen this *cabildo* performing during Día de Reyes celebrations and invited them into the studio for a portrait photograph, subsequently using the photograph for commercial purposes. It is nevertheless possible that the *cabildo* members commissioned the photograph themselves, as some members of the Afro-Cuban population had the opportunity to accumulate funds for their own use.

60. Elisabeth Cameron, e-mail messages, March 17 and 20, 1998.

61. Robert Farris Thompson, "Communiqué from Afro-Atlantis," *African Arts* 32, no. 4 (winter 1999): 1, 4, 6, 8.

62. Marc Leo Felix, "Masking in the Upper Zambezi Basin," in *Makishi lya Zambia: Mask Characters of the Upper Zambezi Peoples*, ed. Marc Leo Felix and Manuel Jordan (Munich: Fred Jahn, 1998), 41.

63. Ibid., 44.

64. Cameron, e-mail message, 1998.

65. Levine, *Cuba in the 1850s*, 28.

66. Center for African Art, *African Masterpieces from Munich: The Staatliches Museum für Völkerkunde* (New York: Prestel, 1987), 290.

67. See this and many other photographs of Kongo statues and ritual experts with feathered headdresses in Wyatt MacGaffey, "The Eyes of Understanding: Kongo Minkisi," in *Astonishment and Power* (Washington D.C.: National Museum of African Art; Smithsonian Institution Press, 1993).

68. The Museum voor Volkenkunde has since changed its name to the Wereldmuseum. For a more detailed and expanded discussion of this phenomenon, see Judith Bettelheim, "Costume Types and Festival Elements in Caribbean Celebrations," pt. 2, "The Afro-Amerindian," *African Caribbean Research Review* 4 (1999): 1–46.

69. In an earlier version of this paper I included a discussion of Brazilian parallels centering on the figure of the *coboclo*, or Indian, and the evidence of Indian spirits and masqueraders in Angola houses of the Candomblé religion, as well as houses of the Umbanda religion. In both cases, as Barbara Browning suggests," in these houses the figure of the 'Indian' has been imbued with both spiritual and political significance . . . the *coboclo* is an idealized image of the resistant black." Browning, *Samba: Resistance in Motion* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), 24.

70. Joe Boyd, founder of Hannibal Records, quoted in David Gonzalez, "There's Another Big Band from Cuba," *New York Times*, July 1, 2001, sec. 2, 24. This same point is made in another article about the "origins" of jazz in New Orleans, Ben Ratliff, "New Home for a Trove of Music," *New York Times*, October 24, 2001, sec. E, 1.

71. Samuel Kinser, *Carnival American Style: Mardi Gras at New Orleans and Mobile* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 162–63.

72. These churches are also known as Black Hawk churches, and their services are similar to those of the Spiritism movement.

73. Kinser, *Carnival American Style*, 163–64.

74. Stephen C. Wehmeyer, "Indian Altars of the Spiritual Church, Kongo Echoes in New Orleans," *African Arts* 33, no. 4 (winter 2000): 62–69.

75. The specifics of Mother Leafy Anderson's life are somewhat controversial. By some accounts she was born about 1887 in Wisconsin and died in New Orleans in December 1927, but other accounts state that she was probably born in Virginia and as a young woman worked her way to Chicago. She left Chicago for New Orleans in 1918 or 1920 and was likely involved in Spiritism before moving to New Orleans.

76. There are many different Native American leaders who were named Black Hawk. I and other scholars have previously—and incorrectly—suggested that the Black Hawk associated with Mother Anderson was a Sauk (Algonquin) chief (1767–1838) whose autobiography was initially published in 1833 and republished in a more popular version in 1882. Claude F. Jacobs and Andrew J. Kaslow, *The Spiritual Churches of New Orleans: Origins, Beliefs and Rituals of an African-American Religion* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1991), 138. The correct identification is given below.

77. Jason Berry, *The Spirit of Black Hawk* (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 1995), 61.

78. Some of the most important scholars are Berry, *Spirit of Black Hawk*; and Wehmeyer, "Indian Altars."

79. A photograph of this Black Hawk is reproduced in Jane Alison, ed., *Native Nations: Journeys in American Photography* (London: Barbican Art Gallery, 1998), 212.

80. Marsha C. Bol, "Defining Lakota Tourist Art, 1880–1915," in *Unpacking Culture: Art and Commodity in Colonial and Postcolonial Worlds*, ed. Ruth B. Phillips and Christopher Steiner (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 216.

81. Janet Catherine Berlo, *Spirit Beings and Sun Dancers: Black Hawk's Vision of the Lakota World* (New York: George Braziller, 2000), 167.

82. Berry, *Spirit of Black Hawk*, 64.

83. Ibid., 65.

84. Ibid., 58.

85. See the photograph of about 1929 of Mother Anderson's disciple Mother Catherine Seals wearing such a mantle, in ibid., 74.

86. For a more detailed discussion of the Afro-Amerindian and Mardi Gras Indians, see Bettelheim, "Costume Types."

87. Jacobs and Kaslow, *Spiritual Churches of New Orleans*, 141.

88. See the other altars illustrated in Wehmeyer, "Indian Altars," 95.

89. See Wehmeyer, "Indian Altars," relying on the arguments of Thompson and Berry.

90. While there exists a plethora of studies related to circum-Caribbean migrations during the period of the Haitian Revolution and after, I am not aware of any comparable material for the period I consider—just prior to, during, and after the Spanish-American War of 1898, known in Cuba as the War of United States Intervention. The beginning of the Cuban War of Independence is formally dated to 1895, although there were previous armed conflicts of considerable significance, such as the Ten Years War, 1868–78 (see note 14 above). It is during this period that interisland migrations among the Spanish-speaking islands increased and also extended to New Orleans. It is important to remember that slave trade from Africa and intermediary locations to Cuba did not end officially until 1886. It is also important to remember that between the 1870s and 1900 "contract workers," in a quasi-slave-trade arrangement, were brought from Angola to São Tomé and Principe and then often "moved on" to various Portuguese or Spanish ports in the Americas.

91. Sara Elizabeth Johnson-La O, "Migrant Recitals: Pan-Caribbean Interchanges in the Aftermath of the Haitian Revolution (1791–1850)" (PhD diss., Stanford University, 2001), 25.

92. Antonio Benítez-Rojo, *The Repeating Island: The Caribbean and the Postmodern Perspective* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1992), 12.

93. Ibid., 159–60.